

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-5

THE WASHINGTON POST
15 November 1980

The Drums Roll for the Transfer of Power

Factions of the New Reagan Coalition Struggle Over Spoils of Victory

By Robert C. Kaiser
Washington Post Staff Writer

Quadrivial November drums beat across the Potomac, ambitions quiver and grownups do too. Power is passing to new faces, and the overriding question of the moment is, which new faces?

Consumers of inside dope just yesterday had lots to digest: Evans and Novak in this newspaper said William Simon would be back at Treasury in the Reagan administration. The new chief of staff at the White House, said The New York Times (following by a day the same story in The Washington Star), would be James A. Baker III. The Star pleaded with Reagan to bring back Henry A. Kissinger as secretary of state in an editorial that did not claim any inside information. The Star's front page did claim a scoop: that Reagan plans to replace Jimmy Carter's Annapolis classmate, Stansfield Turner, as director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Before this is over, 10,000 sometime-Washingtonians will have lost jobs and 10,000 others will have flashy new titles to write home about. Meanwhile, many more than that number will have ample occasion to worry and grope. 'Tis the season of ambition's folly.

'Tis also a season for serious work by a small number of genuine insiders. Sen. Paul Laxalt, Ronald Reagan's campaign chairman and one of the genuine insiders, bragged good-naturedly yesterday that this group's secrets were staying secret, according to plan.

Still, word that Simon (who once wanted the Pentagon) was going back to Treasury leaked out, as did news of Baker's selection as a new kind of White House chief of staff (responsible more for administration than policy). And there was plenty of evidence of other struggles between factions of the new Reagan coalition over the spoils of victory.

Perhaps more important, but so far much less visible, are the Reagan camp's ideas on how to organize the government. According to several people who think they are in a position to know, chances are good that the top echelon of the federal establishment will have a substantially new look after Jan. 20.

One change being discussed in the Reagan camp is the creation of an inner- or super-cabinet composed of five or six people who would have traditional Cabinet titles, but would work from the Old Executive Office Building across the alley from the White House. The Reagan transition team is organized on the basis of five or six teams that might

give a clue to the organization of a super-cabinet. The five teams cover national security policy, resources and development, human services, economic affairs and legal and administrative agencies.

According to one well-placed source, Reagan is most comfortable with a group of half a dozen or so close associates through whom he can do most of his work. Restructuring the government in this way — something Richard M. Nixon tried to do at the beginning of his second term, though the experiment quickly collapsed — would raise fundamental new issues in the life of this city.

For example, as one man close to the Reagan camp observed, putting super-cabinet members in the OEOB would immediately enhance the authority of the deputy secretaries who would be left behind to administer day-to-day affairs in the departments. It might also create confusion within the permanent bureaucracy about who is running what, according to some skeptical members of the Carter administration who have heard talk of the Reagan camp's plans.

Skepticism from the outgoing team is to be expected, but there is one insistent theme in the conversation of Carter administration officials that the new crowd might want to hear. "They ought to say right at the beginning that cabinet government doesn't work, and we're going to run the thing from the White House," as one senior member of the outgoing administration put it. "New presidents always talk about cabinet government, but it never works," said another.

But all that is for later. For now the question is personal power, and who gets it. Will Gov. William Clements of Texas be able to convince Reagan to give John Connally a big job? Will the more adventurous, younger economic thinkers around Reagan succeed in getting New York businessman Lewis Lehrman an important position in the administration? Will Rep. David A. Stockman (R-Mich.), the 34-year-old whiz kid of the tax-cutting, free-market crowd, get the job he'd like as director of the Office of Management and Budget?

CONTINUED